



New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson Signs Disaster Declaration for Doña Ana County

County Commission requests state aid for areas hard hit by recent severe weather

For Immediate Release
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SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson today signed an Executive Order declaring a disaster in Doña Ana County because of extensive storm damage caused by storms that occurred June 26-29. The severe weather and resulting flooding caused impassable roads, downed power lines, and damage to homes and public infrastructure throughout southern Doña Ana County.

“There will be no delay in assistance for those communities affected by this devastating storm,” said Governor Richardson. “Local emergency crews did an outstanding job dealing with the storm, the state is ready to help with the aftermath.”

The Vado and Del Cerro Colonia communities appear to have been hit hardest. As of this morning, there were still large standing pools of floodwaters throughout the area, and most of the floodwater has been contaminated with raw sewage from broken sewer lines and nearby dairies and horse farms.

The disaster declaration makes local communities eligible for reimbursement, at a 75%-25% state-local match, for expenses such as overtime for public safety personnel, repairs to roads, water lines, and sewer lines, and other public assistance needs created by the storm. The money comes from a \$750,000 state disaster relief fund.

In addition, Governor Richardson directed the State Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to work with FEMA to see if any federal assistance is available for individuals.

“We will do everything possible to help any New Mexicans whose property was damaged or destroyed by the storms,” Governor Richardson said.

The OEM has requested a Preliminary Damage Assessment team from FEMA Region 6 in Denton Texas. The FEMA team will be part of a Joint Assessment Team, working with State officials to determine the extent and magnitude of the damage to individuals and families in the affected area. The assessment will be used to help determine whether federal assistance may be available.

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2004-036

DECLARATION OF DISASTER FOR DONA ANA COUNTY

WHEREAS, a series of severe storms beginning on June 26, 2004, have resulted in widespread flooding in southern New Mexico and specifically in Dona Ana County;

WHEREAS, the storm has caused impassable roads, downed power lines, and damage to homes and public infrastructure throughout the southern part of the State;

WHEREAS, all available local and state resources may be insufficient to prevent damage from the results of this storm and the resulting loss will pose a significant threat to the health and safety of the citizens of, and visitors to, the area as well as to the economic base of the affected local governments; and

WHEREAS, this situation constitutes an emergency with potentially catastrophic consequences.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of New Mexico do hereby declare a State of Disaster for Dona Ana County due to widespread flooding.

I FURTHER DIRECT the Department of Finance and Administration to provide emergency financial resources in the amount of \$750,000 to the Department of Public Safety. The Office of Emergency Management of the Department of Public Safety is directed to coordinate all requests for assistance and responses to such requests under the authority of and as determined by the Governor or his Authorized Representative pursuant to and in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 6-7-1 through 6-7-3 as amended, and to request such aid and assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency as may be appropriate.

I FURTHER DIRECT the Adjutant General to order into service any elements of the New Mexico National Guard as are or may be needed to provide military support to civil authorities as needed for this emergency. This action is pursuant to and in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 20-1-6 and 20-4-3A, as amended. Such emergency assistance will be provided during the period of need at the discretion of the Governor's Authorized Representative.

I FURTHER DIRECT all Cabinet Departments and Agencies of the State of New Mexico to provide any assistance that may be requested by the Office of Emergency Management of the Department of Public Safety or State Emergency Operations Center under the authority of the Governor's Authorized Representative.

THIS ORDER supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations, or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as the Governor rescinds it.

ATTEST:
OFFICE THIS

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE

1st DAY OF JULY, 2004

REBECCA VIGIL-GIRON
SECRETARY OF STATE

**WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

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